

27

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"It's really hard to pass there. Track position is really important at a short track like Martinsville (Speedway). It's stressful on the crew chiefs when they have to decide when to take tires and when to stay out."
— Paul Menard

PREVIEW

PAUL MENARD RICHMOND/MENARDS CHEVROLET

MARTINSVILLE SPEEDWAY

OCTOBER 30, 2011

This week's Richmond/Menards Chevrolet at Martinsville Speedway ... Paul Menard will pilot chassis No. 349 from the Richard Childress Racing NASCAR Sprint Cup Series stable. This No. 27 Chevrolet Impala was a brand new addition to the RCR fleet for the 2011 season and was last seen on track at Martinsville Speedway in April, where Menard started 16th and was forced to settle for a 38th-place result after on-track damages caused the motor to expire, prematurely ending the day for the team.

Menard at Martinsville ... In his eight previous starts at Martinsville Speedway, Menard has completed 93.9 percent of his laps (3,772 of 4,019), has an average starting position of 25.2 and an average finishing position of 22.5. His best finish of 13th came in the October 2010 event and his best start at the 0.526-mile speedway came in March 2010 when he took the green flag in the ninth position.

Rewind to April ... Menard started his No. 27 Chevrolet from the 16th position in April's Goody's Fast Relief 500 at Martinsville Speedway. The Eau Claire, Wis., native rallied from early setbacks to climb back into the top 15 and was running there when his Chevrolet was struck from behind and turned into the outside wall. Additional damage sustained from further contact on track caused the motor to expire, ending the day early for the No. 27 team and relegating Menard to a 38th-place finish.

A Loopy Year in Review ... After 32 races, Menard has an average starting position of 11.7, ranking him **fifth** among of all drivers and **fourth** among those competing full time. He maintains an average running position of 16.644, has made 3,670 green-flag passes (ranked **fourth** of all drivers), has spent 4,204 laps racing in the top 15 (ranked **17th** of all drivers), and is ranked **fourth** in the Loop Data category of Quality Passes (1,877 green-flag passes while running in the Top 15). He has also completed 95.9 percent of his contested laps this season (8,862 of 9,237).

2011 Season Statistics:

Starts: 32 **Win:** 1 **Top-five finishes:** 4 **Top-10 finishes:** 7 **Laps led:** 81
Best start: 2nd (Pocono, June and Chicagoland) **Best finish:** 1st (Indianapolis)

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Virginia is for...racing! ... Two members of the No. 27 Richmond/Menards team hail from the Commonwealth of Virginia. Curt Bowman, gas man and fuel system mechanic, is from Meadows of Dan, Va., while tire specialist Chris Sherwood is a Portsmouth, Va., native.

Race Rewind ... One year ago, Menard recorded his best finish of 13th at the Martinsville, Va.-based short track after starting from the 12th position. Despite wrestling a tight-handling machine, he maintained position in the top 15 over the first 100 laps, however, on lap 209 he spun when contact was made with a competitor. Despite their struggles, Menard and his team battled back to finish the 500-lap event with a hard-earned top-15 result.

Meet the Driver ... Menard is scheduled to participate in an autograph session on Friday, October 28 from 5:30 – 6:30 p.m. inside the track's hospitality village, located outside turn four. Ticket-holders selected to attend by the track were notified earlier this month, but fans can visit the Sprint Experience on Friday as Miss Sprint Cup will be giving away extra passes to the autograph session.

